(b) The Ministry of Home Affairs is not concerned with recognition of various movements as Independence Movements. It is concerned with recognition of movements only for the purpose of grant of Freedom Fighters' Pension from Central revenues.

Setting up of FTZ in Andaman and .. ..Nicobar Islands .....

2414. SHRI VIRREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposals have been made/received to set up FTZ in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to take advantage of the entreprenurial expertise and financial resources of the Indian community now based in Hong Kong and other countries of the Pacific Asian Rim;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider instituting such a scheme on its own?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Government are aware of the interest expressed by the Indian community in Hong Kong on this subject.

(b) and (c) Government have since decided that in view of the environmental aspects, it may not, be possible to establish an FTZ in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Rural road traffic

2415. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what contingency plans are likely to be drawn up to meet the increasing rural road traffic;

(b) whether an appropriate national plan has been drawn to meet the intra-regional road traffic arising out to boost rural traffic; if not, whether there is a plan to initiate one; and

(c) whether any blue print has been drawn up to rehabilitate distressed bridges, and development of expressway?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b) The schemes for development of rural road transportation are covered in the Plan schemes under road transport sector in the Five Year Plans. With a view to meet growing traffic requirements in the rural sector, fund projections for improvements in the roads have been recommended by the Working Group on Roads for the Eighth Five Year Plan. Similarly the Working Group on Road Transportation have recommended adequate provision for developmental schemes which include development of vehicle design, appropriate for operations in the rural areas, provision of regular services for passenger movement with linkages to continguous villages and market centres, encouragement for introduction of light weight passenger buses including mini-buses, midi-buses, etc.

In order to meet increasing intra-regional road traffic, National Highways and State Highways roads are required to be widened on selective basis from single lane to two lanes and from two-lanes to four lanes. In some sections, express ways would have been provided. The proposals in this regard form the part of recommendations of the Working Group Report on 8th Five Year Plan.

(c) As regards National Highways, a condition survey of all bridges has been carried out for identifying the distressed bridges. For the purpose of reconstruction and rehabilitation of such distressed bridges, a programme has been drawn-up to be implemented in a phased manner. As regards bridges on State roads, State Governments have been advised to carry out similar condition surveys and take appropriate action to repair and rehabilitate them. For express ways a study is in progress with the technical assistance of Asian Development Bank.